/96 cont./

2. Curing the Sick

754 825 [753] a) General

All sickness is attributed to hostile witch-doctors, especially those of the Waikâ (493). As carriers they use the gavião-real

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493. The idea that sickness is caused by witch doctors is so widespread in South America that from the large number of examples I should like to quote only two authors for comparison: Roth, 1915, p. 346; Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 192.

gavião-real (Thrasaetus harpyia L.) and the bat. Both animals are therefore designated generally as -- nonexí --, that is, evil spirit or spirit of sickness (494) (495). If such an animal is sighted,

494. Nonexí, however, is also the specific name of the gavião-real.

495. Zerries documents the same name, "noneshi" or "nonish," for the Waikâ. With it, however, they designate the shadow-soul or the alter ago (Zerries, 1958a, p. 108).

it is immediately killed, in order to prevent a misfortune. Moreover, it is assumed that with its death a hostile medicine man, who, of course, temporarily inhabits it, has breathed his last. The down feathers of the gavião-real are therefore glued into the hair for a few days as a trophy (see p. 95).

[239]

755 If a member of the tribe has fallen ill, he can be cured only by having the chief, who among the Surára and Pakidái is at the same time the medicine man, and his helpers try to hurl the sickness back to the enemies. This can be done, however, only in the snuff-powder intoxication and by invoking

Surára
Pakidái

/110 cont./

527 Between the patapšanomão festivals the Surára and Pakidái have only a few other festivities in the course of the year. These are but small celebrations, which, for example, take place after the two-months' training of two young men as medicine-man helpers, after a successful war-expedition, upon moving into a newly erected maloka, and in connection with the second menstruation of a girl. The latter has more of an intimate character, for only families of relatives and friends take part in it.

4. Magic for Sickness, Hunting, Love, and Rain

•754 825 a) Magic for sickness:

[824] A magic powder is occasionally prepared from the bark ashes of a wild mimosa species (Mimosa acacioides?) -- hekurâhihenâ -- (see also p. 192) and the bone powder of the gavião-real (Thrasaetus harpyia L.). In the evening, shortly before twilight sets in, if a gavião-real happens to be flying by or is sitting on a tree, the chief blows this powder in the direction of the bird. The latter receives it and with it transmits sickness to a specific hostile tribe.

224 789 b) Hunting magic:

[782] The evening before a proposed hunting expedition the hunter takes snuff-powder and prays for about 2-3 hours to the hekurá (see pp. 200/201), whereby through them he requests

[302] Poré and Perimbõ (see p. 197) for a successful outcome. Then, before he sets out the next morning, he paints serpentine lines

[825] on his face and body with urucú. If his wife accompanies him, she also applies this design, and the snout and feet of a dog that is taken along are painted with the same color. This is

[751] supposed to increase the luck of the hunt and is at the same time bound up with defensive magic against possible dangers threatened by poisonous snakes and jaguars.

/111 cont./

832 wearer bites on it and holds it under the nose of a girl or a woman, he gains her favor through the fragrances emanating from it. In fact, I was told that love will then be so great that the woman or the girl would follow him everywhere (547).

547. This type of love magic is reminiscent of a myth of the Aruak /Arawak/ Manao: The Aromatic Root. (Baldus, 1958, pages 32 ff.)

In order to protect themselves from this love magic, married women use two kinds of neck chains. Younger ones [824] have tied to their string of curauá fibers numerous small pieces of tajá root, and older ones, small pieces of the camarau liana (Cipó sp.) -- hií -- (see p. 83). These many pieces of root or liana then counteract the effect of the young men's single piece of root.

•754 If a man is angry at a woman because she does not give him a hearing, he can avenge himself in the following manner: [824] On a rainy day he tears off a leaf of the pupunha palm (Guilielma speciosa Mart.) and goes with it into the forest. When he reaches a matamatá tree (Eschweilera matamata Hub.) from which /112/ drops are falling, he lays the palm leaf under the tree. He leaves it there until it has rotted. Out of it comes a worm which the man later fetches and then roasts. If he throws this upon the sleeping woman, she will have no more children.

789 821 d) Rain magic:

Although the Surára and Pákidái appreciate rain more than too strong a radiation from the sun (548), there are occasions when

[171]

548. In contrast to this, I should like to point out that among the Taulipang, for example, there is great fear of rain (Koch-Grünberg, 1916, pp. 130/31).

/224 cont./

793 The function of the scarab in the curing process is as fol-
755 lows: If the hɛ̃wĩawán wishes to cure a patient, he takes the
825 hĩkula from his chest and places it upon the patient. In order to effect the cure, the scarab opens an invisible hole in the chest of the patient, and the hikuladɛ of the priest enters through there.
[775] /225/ Once within the patient's chest, the hĩkula-dĩb come out of the hikuladɛ in order to combat and bring to the exterior the cause of the sickness. After a while the priest again takes possession of his hikuladɛ, and the treatment is fully successful. The informant did not want to mention the name of the caleopteran or even to talk about it, fearing that if he were to do so and if he were then to become sick, the priest would not be able to cure him, since the insect would not open a hole in the chest of the patient.

793 It is our impression that the priest only cures the ailments
755 that result from the presence, in the body of the sick person,
775 of the soul of a wandering deceased person who has approached the rancherias and whose very presence causes pain.

If we understand that the part of the Sanemá which goes to the house of Omao is the soul, we may say that the priest is concerned with the well-being of the same in the bodies of his companions, and that he represents the actualizing principle between the subject "the soul of the man" and the object "Omao," who enter into communication by means of the inter-
[171] vention of the priest. For the soul, which goes to live in the house of Omao as hĩkula-dĩb, we noted down the name of hɛ̃npĩrtĩb, which essentially seems to correspond in its character to the "bole" of the Waica (Zerries, 1958b).

793 The hɛ̃wĩawán may send a hĩkula-dĩb to a neighboring
775 pueblo in order to cause sickness among its inhabitants, but his
● 754 primary function is to guarantee the well-being of the souls of his community and to present them eventually to Omao at death.
793 It is interesting in this respect to note that the Surara and Pakidai,
754 subgroups of the Yanoama of Brazil, are of the opinion that
825 sicknesses are transmitted by a shaman of a neighboring pueblo
000 by means of sparrow hawks and bats. The Sanemá say that the

/228 cont./

756 The Sanemá sablf has great power over animals and plants
778 represented in his hikuladɛ, with which he communicates while
825 he is asleep. If he should dream about a dangerous animal, a
[533] jaguar for instance, he makes him sit down in order to begin the song ōkamō against jaguars. This song keeps the jaguar from the rancheria, but, when it is relatively near, the hikuladɛ of the sablf goes out to kill the jaguar in the forest, where the hunters will find him dead on the following day. But if the men sent by the sablf do not find the body of the jaguar, everybody remains in the rancheria on the following day, for they fear that the Great Jaguar may be in the forest and will kill anybody found in his way.

756 The sablfes sing almost every night, and the bigger the
533 animal who appears to them in their dreams, the more intense
754 is the song. In his songs, the sablf can send any hfkula from
[825] his chest to go and kill a man in a foreign rancheria, however
[774] far it is. Usually he does this at night, and on the following day the victim's companions find him dead in his hammock.

774 I have the impression that the hfkulas belonging to the
756 various species are, of themselves, absolutely passive and that they behave in an active way only at the command and wish
[754] of the sablf. Most sicknesses, including death, are caused by a
[753] hfkula introduced into the body of the man by the intervention
[761] of the sablf and by his magical power.

756 The priest sablf, influenced by the effects of yopo, shouts,
755 sings, and dances around the patient. With this he attempts to scare
774 off the harmful hfkula which is striving to enter the body of the man. It is very often personified by a man who is symbolically fought by the hfkula of the sablf and others chosen from his "pueblo of hfkula" in his chest. The curative art of the sablf depends to a great degree on his diagnosis, according to which he chooses from his great hfkula in his chest those which, by their skill, can combat the hfkula or hfkulas causing the sickness. It goes without saying that a young and inexperienced sablf makes mistakes in his diagnosis of identifying, from among all the possible thousands, the hfkula which is causing the sickness sent by an enemy. It

/228 cont./

756 may also happen that a sablf with a small "pueblo" of hfkulas in
755 his chest does not have at his disposal a hfkula suitable for bringing
774 about the desired result. In this case, one turns to a more expert sablf, who will receive for his services presents of food, etc. A young sablf is always hopeful that the hfkula "pueblo" in his chest will grow. But the /229/ older the man becomes, the less opportunity he has of augmenting his power.

758 The potentiality of the hfkula of the sablf makes him in-
774 vulnerable, and should anyone shoot an arrow at him he breaks
[789] his hand and his weapons. For this reason the sablf is the best
[624] man to lead as the war chief, or at least he inspires and helps with his magical power and his singing along the way.

756 A sablf of great power does not die until all the hfkulas of
763 the plants, animals, and, some say, of the stars have come to
774 live in his chest, and, when they have done this, the power of his hfkula grows and brings about his death. Then the sablf in-
● [754] forms his people, says farewell to all those whom he has protected during all the years of his adult life, and, as a last service, promises to kill the neighboring enemy group just as soon as his hfkula frees itself from his body. On dying, the red stone which he had, which had come down with a great noise from heaven, once again goes back up to the place from which it came (24).

24. I have not been able to gather any further details regarding this stone, nor have I seen it.

774 The hfkula of a man, animal, or plant, after death, does
775 not go to heaven, but rather congregates in a special place. Our informant told us that the hfkulas of male human beings later change after some time into butterfly jaguars /tigres mariposas/. In this form they continue the life that they had in the man; they recognize friends and enemies and the men of the group to which they belonged and also the enemy men against whom they fought. Sometimes a man will meet a butterfly jaguar in the forest; he realizes that he has met a hfkula of his group or one from a dead sablf. He does not kill it and allows the jaguar to go by quietly without even threatening it with his weapon.

/230 cont./
present by taking out from under his tongue stones, small sticks, vermin, etc. "Arrows" come out in the form of a black liquid, of tobacco, etc. He spits out and tramples on what he has been able to extract. The kâilala of the Sanemá also possesses power that is benevolent and malignant at the same time and can shoot magic arrows at the enemy rancheria, thus causing sickness or death. If we compare this religious complex of the Sanemá with that of the Warao, we find such a great similarity that there cannot be the least doubt but that both have the same origin.

Among the Warao the temple cult is strictly local and cannot be carried out in a place where there is no priest, who may be a man or a woman, although for this office there is a special category in the society of the Warao. It is not hereditary and can be obtained by the special calling of the Supreme Being, Kanobo.

The son of a priest is generally considered as more suitable -- by birth -- to fill the office of his father, but although the son may be competent to succeed his father in a political position, he does not necessarily have the right to succeed him as priest, as happens among the Taino, where the son inherits the office of priest together with the chieftainship.

The Warao temple cult is furthermore completely separate from shamanism and magic; religious matters are the responsibility of especially designated persons who act only within their own domain. /231/ The fact that the priest may cure sickness must not lead the observer to false conclusions, since it is logical, according to Warao mentality, that the priest controls -- through the power of God -- the spirits of heaven, whose desire is to take everyone to the side of God, to whom they owe obedience and whose orders are transmitted to them by the mediation of the priest. These are spirits objectively good, but which become subjectively bad when with their metaphysical capability they enter the body of a man, physically limited, causing a pressure, that is, a sickness. In Warao terminology the priest cures by "alleviating this pressure," bringing about as a result typical ailments, such as fevers of various kinds, which he cures by frightening away the spirits with merely his presence, but in particularly critical and difficult cases he may also use one of his maraca /gourd rattle/.

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Naturally it wasn't our present hosts who had attacked the Brazilians. They denied it themselves. It was other Samatari 'along that way' (a vaguely south-westward direction was indicated): very bad men they were, very savage, they were really the true, dyed-in-the-wool Kasarape—monsters who took prisoners in their battles and then split them in two on a stake driven into the earth, and afterwards made a meal of them.

Anyone who has the least idea of Indians will know how much faith to put in their tales that they themselves are so good and the other tribes 'over there' so bad: precious little. The Indians one meets are always harmless, hardworking and peaceable—according to their own account: it is the neighbouring tribe that is so bad, harrying them and laying waste their fields and robbing them and exercising their wicked magic through their medicine men, causing their children—the strength and hope of the tribe—to die of the evil eye.

You can take a region in which acts of barbarism have been committed, and make a tour right round it, and if you believe the Indians it is always the tribe further on who are the bad men responsible for the outrage. And then there are those super-bad-men, the quintessence of badness, always right outside the closed circle, the dregs of the dregs in wickedness—the super-savages, the Guaikiri. But this time, so we were led to infer by our hosts, the tribe to blame were the Kasarape who lived on the right bank of the Uraricoera, fiercest of all the outcasts and intent on chopping up every Samatari's spine to suck the marrow out.

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Luis Antonio had told me, some time during the night, that the Samatari were no longer friends of his. The Samatari and the Uarema Guayca were enemies now, the one having accused the other of the evil eye. Many Samatari babies had died lately, and if you followed out some tortuous paths of thought it apparently became clear that their deaths had been caused by the perversity of the elders of the Guayca tribe. These in their turn attributed the deaths of certain Guayca children who had been ill in recent years to the Samatari. The magic score was thus settled, but it left a remnant of hostility which had fallen upon Enrico and me. We stood in some danger between the opposing occult powers.

I learned, too, that the wretched little infant we had seen at the Mené landing—a scion of the Uarema tribe—had died mysteriously, so the Guayca thought, owing to Samatari magic. The excursion on which he was being taken at the time when we had seen him was made with the object of taking

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him outside the range of the magic influence which had reduced him to such a hideous condition. But evidently they had only escaped the Samatari magic to fall straight into another, which was too much for the sick child. He died, sacrificed in a duel between two magic powers.

VI

The great 'provisioning-march' of the Samatari now began. We went along with them. We were prisoners, we were guests, we were tolerated visitors—a bit of everything. The main body, with the women and children, led the way along a track that was years old and had been opened up again the day before by the younger members of the tribe, who possessed the one metal weapon used by the Samatari: a piece of a knife-blade stuck into a stick and firmly bound with bark soaked in vegetable gum. What story could this scrap of steel have told when it finally reached the headwaters of the Aracosa!

The track was by no means straight, but for all its meanderings led vaguely towards the south-east. It lay for the most part through the dense thickets of fruit-bearing trees, which probably harboured other sorts of foodstuffs of which we knew nothing. The main body arrived to find that the young men had already picked nuts and fruit of all kinds and made piles of them at the foot of the trees. All the women had to do was take them up.

When meat of any sort is found and killed on these occasions, a couple of youngsters stay behind with it. They sling a hammock and light a fire and watch while it is slowly smoking on the spit. When the women come up, they pull off pieces of the flesh, put them into the rough hampers they carry on their shoulders and go on with the march, their babies jogging up and down on their backs, tied there with a strap made of bark. Some, like peripatetic vestal virgins, take fire with them, in the form of glowing brands, blowing on them as they go along lest the embers should grow cold. Thus the march of the Samatari leaves a trail of nutshells, rinds, ash, and little bits of charcoal. It suggests not so much an ordinary nomadic people on the move but rather a very special tribe composed of itinerant cooks.

With evening, or strictly speaking some time before the end of the afternoon, we found ourselves in a vast clearing where all the small plants, shrubs, bushes and grass had been cut away and swept and raked aside. All round this

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the poison has time to spread and enter the bloodstream. The Samatari go off to war with masses of these poisoned arrows and a cane quiver slung across their shoulders. This contains spare arrow-heads which can be quickly attached to the arrows arriving in a stream from the enemy. Every fighter carries his own ammunition, but the weapons are really the common property of friend and foe alike.

There is one other widely used weapon, and a deadly one it is—a heavy wooden club for use on the cranium in close-combat conditions, such as usually arise at the end of the battle when the ammunition is exhausted and the antagonists have worked themselves up into a fine frenzy. Then the hand-to-hand fighting excels in ferocity, but the blood scattered on the ground is misleading—the actual mortality rate is very low. Tremendous whacks on the head are exchanged, that lay the scalp open right down to the bone. But cracking the cranium itself is not so easy: Samatari heads are harder than Corozo palm.

One may well ask why the Indians are forever fighting these wars, but this is to put the question a little too ingenuously. The answer can only be that it is their mode of life—just as it is other people's mode of life not to keep on fighting. There are vendettas as old as their race itself, fanned by their belief in the evil eye of the witch doctors who can cause the death of children and spread sickness through the tribe. Fear is the underlying cause, at the origin of these vendettas and at the origin of all origins; fear that is the very condition, the very breath of existence for primitive man in the inhuman, unhuman forest regions that set their stamp on all who live in them. Fear gives birth to these bloody encounters, which a little cool-headedness could transform into the meeting of friends. We ourselves owed our salvation to the fact that we hadn't fought back. We had a certain confidence too, over and above the passing moment of fear, a certain faith in the essential goodness of man.

But apart from fear and the vendettas which grow out of it, there is one native activity which just as easily leads to war: theft. Theft is the activity in which the Shirians excel, their way of living. Everything that can further their nomadic existence is torn out of the earth, the trees and the animals. The process means effort and struggle, always more or less exhausting and unsafe. It follows logically that if anything they basically need belongs to other men, they will take it from them, too. The tribe on the river so-and-so possesses a machete, or a knife—perhaps the result of long bargaining with their neighbours, or, more often, of a highly successful bit of burglary and some

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Sanema

721 [685] skirmishing. After several days' howling and shrieking, an expedition is decided on. It is not certain that a battle will yield the desired utensil or object, but then, it is never certain that a hunt will fill the pot, and many a tree looks promising and then turns out to be barren, or to have no ripe fruit. But a good, just war, the Samatari think—and all their wars are just—always produces something worth fighting for, even if the immediate result isn't one that would [754] strike the impartial observer as advantageous. For even if the encounter produces only negative results, the enemy will henceforth go in fear and it will be a long time before their witch-doctors or magic-men dare to strike at the children again with their black arts of death.

And in addition to all these lines of reasoning, savages cannot grasp, as we can, the notion of victory or defeat, for this means first differentiating war from ordinary normal modes of life and treating it as a special occasion with its own scale of values. For the Indians, war is just one of the facts of life, like the harvest. Its result has no direct value, in so far as that result can always be changed by another war, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

III

*123 When we were not on the march I attended to the sick—an activity which soon grew to such dimensions that I found myself in charge of a full-scale open-air clinic, with a meek queue of patients waiting their turn to see the doctor, and an orderly to help me. The start of it all was the mournful bent old man who came along to us morning, noon and night, pointing to his kidneys and wailing '*Nini*, *nini*'—'Bad, bad.' We had fortunately succeeded in getting back the three or four tins containing our medical supplies, which included a good deal of terramycin presented to us by the manufacturers in exchange for the samples of earth we were to bring back. I imagined that in the case of people like the Samatari, who were completely unaccustomed to any drug at all, an antibiotic should have a very positive effect. In fact, the old fellow definitely improved after taking a few capsules. He was far less bent as he walked and no longer complained that he felt '*nini*'.

This must have been an excellent advertisement for us, because a great many patients began to come forward—most of them not showing any sign of suffering from anything at all. Then they began to understand that we treated wounds

/480 cont./

755 time their croonings and threats directed at the harmful spirit. From time to time they pick up some object which they take with them. Sometimes they finish by inspecting the whole circle of houses, but more frequently the one who heads the "hunt for the spirit" points with his finger at some object, which one of them picks up, the whole group suddenly rushing toward the hut where the sick person is.

755 787 /481/ Frequently one of those who participate in the "hunt for the spirit" falls into a paroxysm, which he generally ends with a tremendous leap into the air, to fall unconscious on the ground. The women immediately bring water and after a while manage to revive him.

On one occasion a man who was crooning before a sick child suddenly lost his mind and began to say strange things. It seemed as though a strange power had seized him, to the point where it was necessary for six men to hold him so that the women could throw water on him to bring him out of his spell.

• 754 They also believe that a man can "send" a sickness or misfortune to another. Frequently the majority of the croonings which they intone in the evenings when they have taken "yopo" are designed to "send" calamities to their enemies.

754 752 123 On a certain occasion, when all were camped about two hours of travel from the settlement, a girl was bitten by a poisonous snake. Her father came to get me to treat her. He told me that he was very angry, and he asked me if it were I who had sent the snake. He was very pleased when I assured him that I had not sent it.

754 They believe that a person can cause an enemy great harm, sickness, and even death, by gathering up "the track" of the enemy and rubbing it between the palms of the hands. For this reason the Guaika /Waica/ do not like to walk in front of somebody who is not in all certainty his friend, especially over soft earth.

The Guaika prepare certain powders which, when they are thrown in the air or blown in the direction of an enemy, can cause him annoyances or harm, according to what they believe, although the said enemy might be many miles away in another settlement.

/486 cont./

825 821 [774] Animals do not have spirits. The thunder is the voice of certain creatures who dwell in the clouds. Frequently I have heard the Guaika say: "Listen to how many there are!"

Lightning is a creature similar to a flame /llama, "flame," "llama"/, which during storms leaps to earth in order to eat trees.

"Ekoa" and "Koje" are rivers in the sky. "Omoa" is the one 776 who pours the water from these rivers over the land. The "amajini" are like human beings, but smaller, who live under the surface of the earth.

[753] "Sulilíwa" can hide himself in the settlements and cause sicknesses. "Wakaliwa" can get into the human body and cause sickness.

821 The wind is regarded as a very terrible enemy, and they believe that it is sent by an enemy. When a storm approaches, the men go out and try to turn it toward an enemy settlement, or at least they hope to be able to turn it away from their own settlement.

789 Sorcery and magic are practiced by most of the men. They ● 754 believe that by taking a little "yopo" through the nasal passage they may have a greater influence on the spirits. There are religious advisers who apparently know the spirits and recommend the measures which must be taken against them. [756]

802 Numbers and Measures

The Guaika /Waica/ have words to designate "one" and "two." Above these quantities it is necessary to say "few," "several," "many," "a great many," "all," etc. They can say two and one, or two and two, but they generally do not do this. They show exact numbers higher than two by raising their fingers. I have seen them cross the dwelling to see if a person is holding up three or four fingers in the semidarkness. /487/ I have asked for as many as 12 objects and received the exact quantity by showing them four fingers of my hand three consecutive times. They understand this, but to express the idea of 11 is quite difficult for them to understand.

829
648 the Yąnomamö. This process is still going on.

794
152 Ferocity and violence is further reflected in Yąnomamö cosmology. In their conception, the human soul has three
[753] parts. One of these parts, the nąreshi, is capable of leav-
[761] ing the body; when it does so, the person becomes ill and dies unless it (the nąreshi) returns. The nąreshi are inherited patrilineally for males and matrilineally for females.
[825] Each human nąreshi has an animal or bird counterpart whose life is coextensive and coterminous with that of the human to which it corresponds. Many of the nąreshi are types of animals commonly taken by hunters. Thus, when the Yąnomamö kill game animals, they believe they also kill the human being to whom that nąreshi corresponds.[1] Hence, hunting in the eyes of the Yąnomamö is behaving fiercely, for every nąreshi animal killed also results in the death of some human, usually an enemy.

• [754] Shamanism also deals in ferocity, for the Yąnomamö
[756] shamans all claim to take mysterious trips to the villages of their enemies and eat the nąreshi of the enemy's children.

*621
156 The complex of ferocity has an important consequence
152 in Yąnomamö social organization, as aggressive behavior detracts from the solidarity of alliances between villages and creates tension within villages. Men are constrained to act ferociously and seize on every opportunity to coerce others in order to display aggressiveness. Most of the displays of

[1] They are not concerned about killing their own nąreshi, for humans and their nąreshi animals live in complementary distribution.

likelihood that marriage practices will depart from the rules governing ideal marriage behavior, then we would expect a reduction in warfare to produce a reduction of this gap. A decrease in warfare should obviate the need for military alliances validated by exchanges of women; under such conditions marriage practice should conform more closely to preferential rules.

The Yąnomamö who live on the Upper Uraricoera and Uraricaá rivers of northern Brazil differ markedly in a number of traits from the Venezuelan Yąnomamö of the Mavaca basin considered in this thesis. A major point of difference is that among the former warfare is much less common than it is among the Yąnomamö described in the preceding chapters. It is likely that this reduction in warfare is partly due to more frequent contact of the Brazilian Yąnomamö with Carib-speaking Indian tribes (Makiritare and Arekuna) and, since 1958, with Christian missions. There appears to be a cline in the decreasing intensity of warfare from southwest, the area in which I conducted my field work, to northeast, the area from which these new data are drawn (see Map D, next page). Yąnomamö from the Upper Padamo River, an area about on the mid-point of this cline, told me that fighting with clubs was very rare in their villages. Migliazza[1] asserts that raiding between villages on the Uraricoera River occurs only every four or five years and is usually provoked by

[1]Personal communication.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195]

accusations of sorcery or by the desire to abduct women.

Another major difference between the Uraricaá and the Mavaca Yąnomamö is the manner in which they treat extra-marital liaisons. On the Uraricaá, liaisons are tacitly permitted and fighting rarely develops between a man and his wife's lover. Should fighting occur, it is generally caused by some incident unrelated to the affair itself. In short, men permit their wives to have extra-marital affairs, provided the women are discreet.

Of major analytical significance is the fact that the Uraricaá Yąnomamö closely adhere to their rules of ambilateral cross-cousin marriage.[1] This stems from the fact that political alliances between villages there never involve the transfer of women from one group to the other. The Yąnomamö of the Uraricaá are endogamous within each congeries of villages having a common history. It would seem, therefore, that the absence of intensive warfare permits marriage practice to follow marriage rules.

The Uraricaá settlement pattern and village organization differ considerably from those found among the Yąnomamö of the Mavaca basin. What I have called a small village of 40 people among the latter segments, on the Uraricaá, into clusters of extended family units separated from each other by as much as half a mile (Migliazza, 1964). The village in which Migliazza lived, for example, comprised 80 persons

[1] Migliazza was not able to give me statistical data on actual marriage practices. I intend to collect this kind of information in January-February 1967 when I visit the Uraricaá area.

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Another important cultivated plant is tobacco. Since men, women, and children all chew tobacco, the patch of ground devoted to its cultivation is quite large. Each family grows its own supply and jealously guards it. It is one of the most commonly stolen crops and, therefore, frequently has a conspicuous stick fence around it to draw the thief's attention to the fact that its owner shows a strong concern for its welfare. A man will even put a fence between his own tobacco and that of his father, should the two crops be planted side by side, and neither man can take a plant belonging to the other without permission. I also saw a young man place a number of sharpened bones in the ground near his tobacco patch so that a thief might suffer a serious foot wound should he trespass.

Cotton is the last plant to which major significance can be attached. The fibers are separated by hand from the seeds and spun into thread with a stick whorl, then several threads are twisted into a thick yarn. The yarn is rolled into balls about the size of a grapefruit and stored until enough has been accumulated to make a hammock. Frequently the balls of yarn are traded to the members of other villages.

The hammocks are manufactured on a crude frame consisting of two upright poles located about 6 feet from each other. The yarn is wrapped around and around the two poles until the desired width of the hammock is reached, usually about a yard, perhaps a little more. About a dozen vertical seams are braided into the horizontal strands of yarn; the poles are removed after the ends of the hammock have been tied with a few strands of cotton string, and the new hammock is completed (see Fig. 2–7). The women also use the yarn to make a short waistband, armband, and halter, and the men use it to make fat, round belts. All ages and sexes use it as a wrist, ankle, knee, and chest cord, and the men make a waist cord of the string, to which they tie their penis foreskins.

Numerous other plants are cultivated in the gardens, but are not as significant in everyday life as those discussed. They include leaf fibers, *bixa* pigment, avocados, drugs, water gourds and gourds for making spoons and ladles, a kind of squash whose seeds are eaten and whose yellow flowers are used by the young girls as decorations, sugar cane, cashew trees, papaya fruit, hot peppers, and a host of magical plants.

Most of the magical plants are associated with benevolent or at least nonmischievous functions. "Female charms" (*sua hãrö*), for example, are used by men to make women more receptive to sexual advances. The dried leaves of the magical plant are mixed with a fragrant wood, and the resulting powder is said to be able to make a reluctant female hunger for sex. Most men carry a small packet of this at all times. The powder is held in the palm of the hand, which is then held firmly against the nose of the female: She is forced to breathe it into her lungs. After she has done this, she becomes very receptive, and can thereafter be easily seduced by the man who charmed her. Another magical plant is cultivated by the women. Its leaves are thrown on the men when they have club fights because it allegedly keeps their tempers under control and prevents the fight from escalating to shooting. Still other plants are cultivated to insure that male or female children grow up to be healthy adults, a different plant being associated with each sex.

Some of the plants are cultivated for malevolent purposes, such as causing the women in enemy villages to have miscarriages or pains in the back when they are preg-

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Fig. 2-7. Orastimi, Kaobawä's brother's daughter, making a hammock for trade with allies.

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nant, while other plants allegedly cure the same evils. Kaobawä's followers do not cultivate many of these malevolent magical plants; they claim, however, that the "Waikas"[8] use them extensively and blow harmful charms at their enemies through hollow tubes. The failure of Kaobawä's group to use magical plants in this fashion is cited as a distinguishing feature that sets it aside from other groups of Yanomamö.

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[8]The Yanomamö are sometimes referred to in the literature by such designations as Shiriana, Xiriana, Guaharinbo, and Waika. The first three terms are foreign words meaning "howler monkey" and have been applied to the Yanomamö by their northern neighbors, the Carib-speaking Makiritare Indians. A good deal of the early information came from the quite unreliable accounts travelers obtained from the Makiritare. The term "*Waika*," however, from the verb *waikä*, is a Yanomamö word meaning "to kill an animal (or man) that is already dying from a wound." Zerries (1964) used the term "*Waika*" in much the same sense that I am using the term "Yanomamö." *Waika*, however, is very ambiguous and imprecise. For example, members of village "A" will assert that members of village "B" are "Waikas." If you ask members of village "B" if they are Waikas, however, they will deny it and say they are Yanomamö, adding that the members of village "C" are Waikas. When you question members of village "C," you will get the same answer: The Waikas live in the next village, only Yanomamö live here. Nevertheless, the term does have currency in the villages near the headwaters of the Orinoco River. One of my informants claimed that the blood of "Moon" (see the third section of this chapter) changed into Waikas, but they became extinct because they were so fierce. He also asserted that the Waikas were Yanomamö.

SHAMANS The nature of the relationship between man and spirit is largely one of hostility. The shamans, by and large, spend most of their time casting charms on enemies and enjoining their own personal demons to prevent harm from befalling the local people. Magic and curing are intimately bound up in shamanism, the practitioner devoting his efforts alternatively to causing and curing sickness.

The demons that the shamans contact are *hekura*, very tiny humanoid beings that dwell on rocks and mountains. Particularly successful shamans can control these demons to such an extent that the *hekura* will come and live inside the chest of the shaman. Each shaman solicits the aid of numerous *hekura* and attempts to lure them into his body.

Men who want to become shamans (*shabori*) go through a simple rite of fasting and chastity. They sit before their houses, use only a few trails, eat very little, and spend most of their time in a contemplative stupor brought about by hunger and drugs. After several days of this, the initiate has entered the world of the *shabori*, and can practice his skill. Each village has as many *shabori* as there are men who wish to enter this status: probably half of the men in each village are shamans.

Rerebawä told me that he was going to become a *shabori*, as he enjoyed taking the drugs and making contact with the spirit world. He decided to do this because his wife is still nursing their youngest child so that he cannot have sexual relationships with her anyway; the obligatory chastity associated with becoming a shaman will not be as difficult now as it would be when his wife weans the child. No *hekura* will dwell in the chest of a novice *shabori* who continues to have sexual relationships. After the practitioner has captured the *hekura* and they become acquainted with him, they will stay in his chest after he resumes his sexual activities.

Contact with the *hekura* is achieved by taking drugs. Particularly adept *shabori* can contact their *hekura* with only a pinch of drug, which they inhale directly from their fingers. Most of them, however, take a large dose of the drug by means of the hollow blowing tube. The *shabori* then prances back and forth in front of his house and chants to the demons he attempts to control, enjoining them to descend on enemies and cause them sickness (see Fig. 2-9). If he is curing someone, he chants before the house of the patient, rubs him, massages him, and draws the evil spirit causing the sickness to some extremity, such as an arm or leg. Then he sucks or pulls the spirit out and carries it away from the sick person, either vomiting it out or throwing it away, depending on how he extracted it originally. The Yąnomamö do not employ medicines made from plants or animals. Consequently, they rely exclusively on the cures that the *shabori* effect, fighting supernatural ills with supernatural medicine.

One of the surprises of my field experience was that I had to spend a great deal of time curing the sick, and my medicines were always in demand. The sick people, however, always took their illnesses to the *shabori* after I had treated them—one cannot be too careful.

CONCLUSION In summary, the Yąnomamö have effected an adaptation to their three environments. This is not to say that other means and techniques could not do the job equally well; but the peculiar combination of technology, social organization, and cosmology found among the Yąnomamö distinguishes them as a group from all other tribes. Although their technology is primitive, it permits them to exploit their jungle habitat sufficiently well to provide them with the wherewithal of physical comfort. The nature of their economy—slash-and-burn agriculture—coupled with the fact that they

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and guests that gradually died off as each group busied itself in preparation for the dance.

Shortly after noon a rumor circulated through the village that the visitors had been raiding the gardens at night and stealing plantains. A number of people, particularly older men, were visibly upset by this new information, giving rise to another rumor that there would be a chest-pounding duel to set the matter straight. The guests had already worn their welcome thin by arriving uninvited a week in advance and by eating excessively. Their hosts were becoming angry with them, as it was all too obvious that they were deliberately taxing their hosts' patience; they were intimidating them.

The men of the host group had finished their preparations for the feast; they were all painted in red and black, bearing colorful feathers. They had cleaned the debris from their houses, had finished hauling out the weeds they had picked from the village clearing, and had brought in quantities of food to give their guests. Now, it was time for them to take *ebene*, their hallucinogenic drug. They separated into several groups and began blowing the brownish-green powder up each other's nostrils with 3-foot long hollow tubes. As the drug would be administered, each recipient would reel from the concussion of air, groan, and stagger off to some convenient post to vomit. Within ten minutes of taking the drug, the men would be bleary-eyed and wild, prancing around in front of their houses, stopping occasionally to vomit or to catch their breath. In each group there would be one man particularly adept at chanting to the *bekura*, the mountain demons, and he would soon take over the show, while the others retired to the sidelines in a stupor, green slime dripping from their nostrils. Should there be sick people in the village, the adept chanters—the *shabori*—would cure them by chanting, massaging, sucking, and vomiting out the evil spirit that caused the sickness. Otherwise, they would chant about other things, perhaps sending their *bekura* to enemy villages to eat the souls of children, or enjoining them to prevent their enemies from doing the same. Occasionally, one of the men takes too much of the drug and become violent. On this particular occasion, Shiimima, one of Kaobawä's brothers, grabbed his bow and arrows and ran to the center of the village. This caused a minor sensation for a moment, but one of the men managed to catch and disarm him, hiding his weapons so he could not find them. Things returned to normal again, and the other participants in the drug-taking began chanting to Shiimima to restore him to his senses. The chanting lasted for an hour or so, and the participants, one by one, returned to their houses to clean up their paint jobs; most of them had smeared their careful work by vomiting all over themselves.

While the men were taking their drugs, the women were busy painting and decorating themselves with feathers and red pigment. The visitors, also, were busy at the same tasks, and the excitement of the feast reached fever proportions by mid-afternoon. A few women were still busy finishing trade baskets, while Kaobawä's younger brothers continued with the monotonous cooking of what seemed to them an endless number of plantains.

Finally, an old man from the visiting group entered the village and marched unceremoniously across the clearing while the members of Kaobawä's group cheered him. He was too old to join the dancing, but too respected to wait behind with the women and children while the younger men put on their display. This was evidence that the visitors were about to send in their delegate to accept the feast invitation at Kaobawä's house.

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5

Yąnomamö Warfare

Levels of Violence

*628 THE FEAST AND ALLIANCE can and often do fail to establish stable, amicable relationships between sovereign villages. When this happens, the groups may coexist for a period of time without any overt expressions of hostility. This, however, is an unstable situation, and no two villages that are within comfortable walking distance from each other can maintain such a relationship indefinitely: They must become allies,
*628 721 • 754 or hostility is likely to develop between them. Indifference leads to ignorance or suspicion, and this soon gives way to accusations of sorcery. Once the relationship is of this sort, a death in one of the villages will be attributed to the malevolent *hekura* sent by shamans in the other village, and raids will eventually take place between them.

726 Yąnomamö warfare proper is the raid. That is, not all of their feuding and squabbles can be considered as war, although the values associated with war—bellicosity, ferocity, and violence—undoubtedly increase the amount of all kinds of fighting.

*628 578 152 154 War is only one form of violence in a graded series of aggressive activities (Chagnon 1967). Indeed, some of the other forms of fighting, such as the formal chest-pounding duel, may even be considered as the antithesis of war, for it provides an alternative to killing. Duels are formal and are regulated by stringent rules about proper ways to deliver and receive blows. Much of Yąnomamö fighting is kept innocuous by these rules so that the concerned parties do not have to resort to drastic means to resolve their grievances. The three most innocuous forms of violence, chest pounding, side slapping, and club fights, permit the contestants to express their hostilities in such a way that they can continue to remain on relatively peaceful terms with each other after the contest is settled. Thus, Yąnomamö culture calls forth aggressive behavior, but at the same time provides a regulated system in which the expressions of violence can be controlled.

*628 578 The most innocuous form of fighting is the chest-pounding duel described in the last chapter. These duels usually take place between the members of different villages and are precipitated by such minor affronts as malicious gossip, accusations of cowardice, stinginess with food, or niggardliness in trading.

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Although few raids are initiated solely with the intention of capturing women, this is always a desired side benefit. A few wars, however, are started with the intention of abducting women. I visited a village in Brazil in 1967 that had a critical shortage of women. A group of missionaries had moved into this village a few years earlier and learned of the treachery by which the group managed to obtain a number of their women. One of them gave me this account. The headman of the group organized a raiding party to abduct women from a distant group. They went there and told these people that they had machetes and cooking pots from the foreigners, who prayed to a spirit that gave such items in answer to the prayers. They then volunteered to teach these people how to pray. When the men knelt down and bowed their heads, the raiders attacked them with their machetes and killed them. They captured their women and fled.

Treachery of this kind, the *nomoboni,* is the ultimate form of violence. Kąobawï's group suffered a massacre in 1950, as I have mentioned earlier, but the treachery in this case was in revenge for a murder. Still, their assailants attempted to abduct women after the objectives of their treachery were accomplished. Had it not been for their greed to capture women, the massacre would have been even more complete. Many escaped because the assailants turned their attention to the women.

Generally, however, the desire to abduct women does not lead to the initiation of hostilities between groups that have had no history of mutual raiding in the past. New wars usually develop when charges of sorcery are leveled against the members of a different group. Once raiding has begun between two villages, however, the raiders all hope to acquire women if the circumstances are such that they can flee without being discovered. If they catch a man and his wife at some distance from the village, they will more than likely take the woman after they kill her husband. If, however, the raiders are near the village, they may flee without dragging a captured woman along, as the body of their victim will be discovered quickly and pursuit will be immediate. Hence, they do not take a chance on hindering their flight by dragging a reluctant captive with them. A captured woman is raped by all the men in the raiding party and, later, by the men in the village who wish to do so but did not participate in the raid. She is then given to one of the men as a wife. If the captured woman is related to her captors, she is not raped.

Most wars are merely a prolongation of earlier hostilities, stimulated by revenge motives. The first causes of hostilities are usually sorcery, murders, or club fights over women in which someone is badly injured or killed. Occasionally, food theft involving related villages also precipitates raiding. This was the cause of the first raids between Kąobawï's group and the Patanowä-teri; they split from each other after a series of club fights over women. Each group made a new garden and returned periodically to the old one to collect peach-palm fruit, a crop that continues to produce long after the garden itself has gone to weeds. Someone stole the peach-palm fruit belonging to a man in the other group, resulting in another food theft for revenge, a club fight, and then raiding, but it should be pointed out that the raiding came about only after a long history of disputes between the groups; food theft was merely the catalyst that finally initiated the hostilities.

The Yąnomamö themselves regard fights over women as the primary causes of their wars. I was in one of the more remote villages in 1967, visiting with people I had met on my first field trip. The headman of the village, Säsäwä, coveted my British commando knife and kept begging me to give it to him. He wanted me to tell him all about the knife, its origin, history, and how often it had been exchanged in trades. When I told